

QUERY CONTROL FORM		RTIS USE ONLY	
Application No. <u>09/889465</u>	Prepared by <u>C. Tennant</u>	Tracking Number <u>5948864</u>	
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b. Applicant(s)	g. Disclaimer	l. Print Fig.	q. PTOL-85b
c. <u>Continuing Data</u>	h. Microfiche Appendix	m. Searched Column	r. Abstract
d. PCT	i. Title	n. PTO-270/328	s. Sheets/Figs
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[illegible]

This application is a 371 of PCT/US00/30769, which
claims benefit of 60/230,020, filed 9/5/2000, 60/175,399, filed
1/11/2000, and 60/169,635,
filed 12/8/1999.

Retinopathy is any non-inflammatory disease of the retina. Diabetic retinopathy is any retinopathy associated with any form of diabetes mellitus.

Retinopathy will affect the majority of diabetic people to some extent during their lifetimes. It is the leading cause of blindness in Americans of age 20 to 74 today, and is expected to impair vision in approximately one-third of diabetic people in the United States. Each year in the United States, as many as 40,000 new cases of blindness occur among diabetic people (CDC, unpublished data, 1993). Diabetic people are 25 times more likely than the general population to become blind due to retinopathy.

Diabetic retinopathy has two stages—a nonproliferative stage, which typically occurs first, and a proliferative stage. The nonproliferative stage, which is also referred to as "background diabetic retinopathy," is characterized by thickening of the basement membrane, loss of retinal pericytes, microvascular abnormalities, intraretinal microaneurysms, retinal hemorrhages (also known as "dot blot" hemorrhages), retinal edema, in particular diabetic macular edema, capillary closure associated with retinal ischemia or poor retinal perfusion (i.e., poor vessel development) and soft and hard exudates. The proliferative stage, which affects an estimated 700,000 Americans (Chen et al., J. Miss. State Med. Assoc. 36(7): 201-208 (1995)), is characterized by neovascularization and fibrovascular growth (i.e., scarring involving glial and fibrous elements) from the retina or optic nerve over the inner surface of the retina or disc or into the vitreous cavity.